

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

On page 1, immediately after the title, please insert the following heading:

--Background of the Invention--.

On page 4, line 3, please insert the following heading:

--Summary of the Invention—

On page 27, line 9, please insert the following heading:

--Brief Description of the Drawings--

On page 28, line 18, please insert the following heading:

--Description of Specific Embodiments--.

On page 39, lines 5 through 18, please amend this paragraph as follows:

Fig. 5 shows another alternative embodiment of the invention, whereby the rapid thermal processing unit 1 shown in fig. 5 is of substantially the same structure as the rapid thermal processing unit 1 in accordance with fig. 1. The only difference is that the semiconductor wafer 2 is not laid on top of holding pins 34 which extend from the lower cover plate 28. Instead, a separate holding device 56 is provided for the semiconductor wafer 2 which is coupled with the leg 22 of the holding device 16. The holding device 56 has a first leg 58 which extends at right angles to the leg 22 of the first holding device 16, a leg 64 60 which extends at right angles to this and to the center of the chamber, and a leg 62 which extends upwards, the open end of which forms a support surface for the wafer 2. The advantage of this holding device 56 for the wafer 2 is that the lower cover plate has a level surface without holding elements on top of it, and is therefore easier to handle and to clean.

On page 41, after line 3, please insert the following two new paragraphs:

--The specification incorporates by reference the disclosure of German priority document 102 36 896.1 filed 12 August 2002 and PCT/EP2003/008220 filed 25 July 2003.

The present invention is, of course, in no way restricted to the specific disclosure of the

specification and drawings, but also encompasses any modifications within the scope of the appended claims.--